



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

HEADQUARTERS
579 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION • LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-2406 FAX (213) 621-0387

BRANCH OFFICE
3333 WILSHIRE BOULEVARD • LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90010
(213) 738-2222 FAX (213) 637-0820

MICHAEL J. HENRY
DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL

November 13, 2008

To: Each Supervisor

From: Michael J. Henry
Director of Personnel

Subject: **REPORT ON COUNTYWIDE WELLNESS PROGRAM**

As instructed by your Board order on September 11, 2007, to examine opportunities to implement innovative cost saving initiatives that go beyond the "Cost Mitigation Goals and Objectives (CMGOs)" set out in the fringe benefit agreements with SEIU Local 721 (Local 721) and the Coalition of County Unions (CCU), we have built a robust wellness program utilizing carrier programs and internal resources. This is to provide you with information on the enhanced Countywide Wellness Program.

Call to Action

In a joint signature memo on September 28, 2007, the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and I announced a new negotiated wellness program for Local 721, "My Health Is My Wealth", as a first phase of an overall wellness initiative that will impact all County employees. We also asked Department Heads to designate a Wellness Program Manager to spearhead wellness in each County department. Meetings for the Wellness Program Managers are held bi-monthly and include training on new additions to the program, "best practices" presentations, and guest speakers on health and productivity management.

Since the call to action, we are please to report that 39 departments have designated a Wellness Program Manager and 25 have formed active wellness committees to encourage employees to make healthy lifestyle choices and reduce incidents of chronic diseases. We have outreached to all Wellness Program Managers and asked that a Local 721 represented County employee is included on every wellness committee. Every department with a wellness committee has complied with this request. In addition, five County departments were recognized on October 20, 2008, by the CEO and Department of Human Resources for their wellness efforts. They are Consumer Affairs, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, Public Health, Public Social Services (DPSS), and Public Works. Your Board also honored DPSS at your October 21, 2008, Board meeting for their efforts in promoting wellness within their department.

Elements of the Countywide Wellness Program

- "My Health Is My Wealth" is a comprehensive initiative developed through a collaborative labor management partnership in a Sub-Committee on Wellness with Local 721. It is one component of the Countywide Wellness program and includes a Wellness Governance

document that was approved by both management and labor. The Sub-Committee has met nearly every month since its inaugural meeting on March 8, 2007.

- Internet-based carrier programs to assess current health status and risks, improve health status, manage chronic diseases, and provide healthy lifestyles resources such as exercise and fitness guidelines, healthy recipes, and weight management tips. Employees can receive \$50 reward cards as an incentive for participating.
- Similar wellness program enhancements have been rolled out to non-represented employees in February 2008, and to the CCU Kaiser participants in July 2008.
- Monthly Webinars, onsite "Lunch and Learns" and carrier presentations at outlying departments, and walking programs sponsored by Kaiser and PacifiCare for their participants.

Attached for your review is a detailed listing of current wellness program offerings and activities.

Next Steps

In July 2008, we retained a wellness consultant, Mercer Human Resource Consulting (Mercer), to develop an overarching Countywide strategy and to develop metrics to measure and report the results of our efforts. Mercer completed an inventory of available programs and resources and is currently developing an analytics piece to provide the basis for the strategy. We expect to have the strategy completed in early 2009. However, in the meantime, your office may be visited by Local 721 with their concerns that not enough is being done. Local 721 is aggressively pushing to add additional components now; however, it is important that we wait for Mercer's findings and recommendations so that the wellness program is truly a Countywide endeavor. Once the strategy is complete, we will invite the unions to participate.

In addition, our contract with Buck Consultants, LLC, our benefits communications consultant, calls for the development of a Countywide-themed quarterly wellness newsletter designed to target all County employees. The first newsletter will go out to County employees beginning in first calendar quarter 2009. The second quarterly newsletter will incorporate the Countywide wellness strategy that Mercer recommends.

If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may call Marian Hall, Assistant Director, Department of Human Resources, at (213) 738-2222.

MJH:MLH
MEG:sl

Attachment

c: Chief Executive Officer
Deputy Chief Executive Officers
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

WELLNESS PROGRAM ELEMENTS

CARRIER PROGRAMS

- Anthem Blue Cross, Kaiser Permanente and PacifiCare web-based wellness programs offer a wide array of tools and resources. Participants can take an online Health Risk Assessment (HRA). By answering specific questions about their specific lifestyle choices and disclosing current health status, a plan is developed to improve health indicators, such as blood pressure, glucose, or smoking. Participants are rewarded with a \$50 gift card for completing the HRA.
- Kaiser and PacifiCare offer an additional \$50 reward card for taking an online healthy lifestyle program, such as diabetes, weight, and cardio health management.
- Kaiser and PacifiCare offer members free enrollment into walking programs including free pedometers (limited quantities).
- Additional online tools are available, such as videos on health topics, healthy recipes, discounts for health club memberships.

WELLNESS FAIRS

- Seven Fairs held in 2008 at various County facilities.
- Wellness Fairs are a comfortable and fun way for employees to collect valuable health information. The Fairs are intended to encourage employees to go to their doctors regularly and be responsible for their health.

“READY TO GO” PROGRAMS, presented to Wellness Managers during 2008 at Quarterly Wellness Workshops; facilitated by the Department of Human Resources

PacifiCare – Monthly Health Topics

- Six-month online program featuring monthly health topics. (i.e., Asthma, Diabetes, Depression, Heart Health, Nutrition, Sun Safety)
- Each month a featured health topic will be posted online (mini-newsletter). Participants read about the topic and complete an online quiz/survey. Monthly drawings will be held for employees submitting a completed quiz.
- Employees participating in all six monthly health topics will receive a small incentive reward (i.e., fitness kit, pedometer or stress ball) and will be entered into a grand prize drawing.

Kaiser Permanente – Wellness For You

- All County employees may take a free health class at a Kaiser facility. Classes include: Asthma, Diabetes, Depression, Stress Reduction & Relief, Managing Chronic Conditions, Smoking Cessation, Lifestyle and Weight Management. All participants receive a small incentive reward.
- County departments may request a customized walking program. Kaiser provides walking route maps for any County facility including detailed information such as distance of routes, number of steps taken per route, and rate of caloric burn.
- Quarterly drawings are held for departments and employees participating in wellness activities.

CIGNA – American Cancer Society Active For Life

- Ten-week online program encourages employees to be more active on a regular basis by setting individual goals and forming teams for motivation and support. Individuals are rewarded with a small prize as teams progress toward their goals.
- Participants set their own personal activity level goals. Goals can be moderate (such as walking, yard work, or taking the stairs) or more intense (such as running or tennis).
- Participants receive prizes when overall goals are met.
- Upon program completion, departments may renew the ten-week program without carrier-provided incentives.

“LUNCH & LEARN” SEMINARS

- 45 minute lunch time seminar related to the prevention and management of chronic diseases and other health topics such as: Asthma, Better Nutrition, Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, Stress Reduction and Relief, and Weight Management. Followed by a 10-15 minute session of questions and answers.
- Held at any County facility; open to all County employees. Employees are encouraged to enjoy their lunch during the seminar.
- Seminars are presented in an efficient, informative, and entertaining manner. They are designed to not disrupt the workday nor be labor intensive to participate in.
- Monthly Healthy Connections seminars are held at the Hall of Administration for employees at the Civic Center.

ONSITE CARRIER PRESENTATIONS

- County-sponsored health plan providers (Anthem Blue Cross, Kaiser Permanente, and PacifiCare) provide onsite presentations on their respective wellness programs.
- Carriers provide materials detailing program specifics and available incentives.

WEBINARS

- Implemented in March 2008 - monthly 45 minute online and dial-in lunchtime seminars, easily accessible from employees' workspace or in a conference room for a group setting. Held the second Wednesday of every month.
- Topics presented support the prevention and management of chronic diseases such as: Asthma, Better Nutrition, Diabetes, Heart Health, High Blood Pressure, Stress Reduction and Relief, and Weight Management.

OTHER

- Exercise classes at the Hall of Administration in Room B-62. Classes are taught by certified, private instructors or County volunteers. Classes offered include Salsa, Yoga, and Pilates.
- Weight Watchers at Work – A Weight Watchers leader will come to the workplace and provide experienced guidance at weekly meetings. Weight Watchers charges a fee to participants.

Additionally, departments implement decentralized wellness activities that meet the schedules and needs of the department.